

Americans sour on the primary election process and major political parties

By MARC LEVY
Associated Press

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) —

The tiny Aliquippa water authority in western Pennsylvania was perhaps the least-suspecting victim of an international cyberattack.

It had never had outside help in protecting its systems from a cyberattack, either at its existing plant that dates to the 1930s or the new \$18.5 million one it is building.

Then it — along with several other water utilities — was struck by what federal authorities say are Iranian-backed hackers targeting a piece of equipment specifically because it was Israeli-made.

"If you told me to list 10 things that would go wrong with our water authority, this would not be on the list," said Matthew Mottes, the chairman of the authority that handles water and wastewater for



This is a portion of the Municipal Water Authority of Aliquippa, Pa., shown on Dec. 11, 2023 in Aliquippa, Pa.

about 22,000 people in the woodsy exurbs around a one-time steel town outside Pittsburgh.

The hacking of the Municipal Water Authority of Aliquippa is prompting new warnings from U.S. secu-

city officials at a time when states and the federal government are wrestling with how to harden water utili-

ties against cyberattacks.

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Trump appeals Maine ruling barring him from ballot under the Constitution's insurrection clause

By **NICHOLAS RICCARDI**
Associated Press

Former President Donald Trump on Tuesday appealed a ruling by Maine's

Democratic secretary of state barring him from the ballot over his role in the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol. He was expected

to also ask the U.S. Supreme Court to rule on his eligibility to return to the presidency in a related Colorado case. The Republican candidate



Former President Donald Trump speaks during a commit to caucus rally, Dec. 19, 2023, in Waterloo, Iowa.

Associated Press

appealed the Maine decision by Shenna Bellows, who became the first secretary of state in history to bar someone from running for the presidency under the rarely used Section 3 of the 14th Amendment. That provision prohibits those who "engaged in insurrection" from holding office.

The appeal now goes to Maine's Superior Court. Trump was also expected to appeal a similar ruling by the Colorado Supreme Court directly to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The nation's highest court has never issued a decision on Section 3, and the Colorado court's 4-3 ruling that it applied to Trump was the first time in history the provision was used to bar a presidential contender from the ballot.

Trump's critics have filed dozens of lawsuits seeking to disqualify him from the ballot in multiple states. None succeeded until a slim majority of Colorado's seven justices — all of whom were appointed by Democratic governors — ruled against

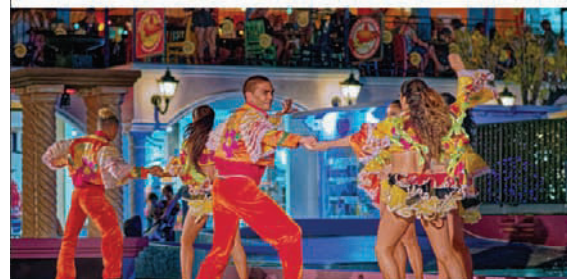
Trump. Critics warned that it was an overreach and that the court could not simply declare that the Jan. 6 attack was an "insurrection" without a more established judicial process.

A week after Colorado's ruling, Bellows issued her own. Critics warned it was even more perilous because it could pave the way for partisan election officials to simply disqualify candidates they oppose. Bellows, a former head of Maine's branch of the American Civil Liberties Union, has previously criticized Trump and his behavior on Jan. 6.

Bellows said her own views had nothing to do with her ruling, which sought to apply the law. She acknowledged the Supreme Court would probably have the final say after the Colorado case but said she still had a responsibility to act. She was the first top election official to do so. Many others, Democrats and Republicans had told activists urging them to strike Trump from the ballot that they did not have that power. □



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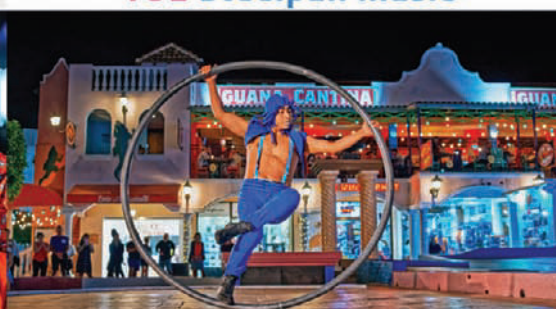
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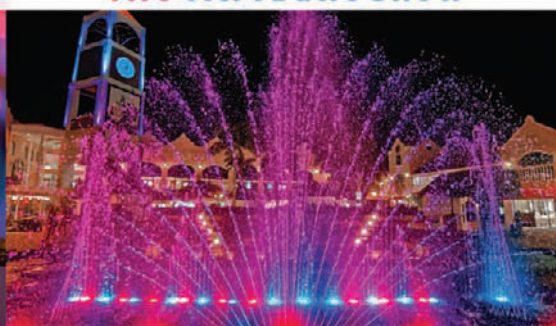
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Americans sour on the primary election process and major political parties

Continued from Front

The danger, officials say, is hackers gaining control of automated equipment to shut down pumps that supply drinking water or contaminate drinking water by reprogramming automated chemical treatments. Besides Iran, other potentially hostile geopolitical rivals, including China, are viewed by U.S. officials as a threat.

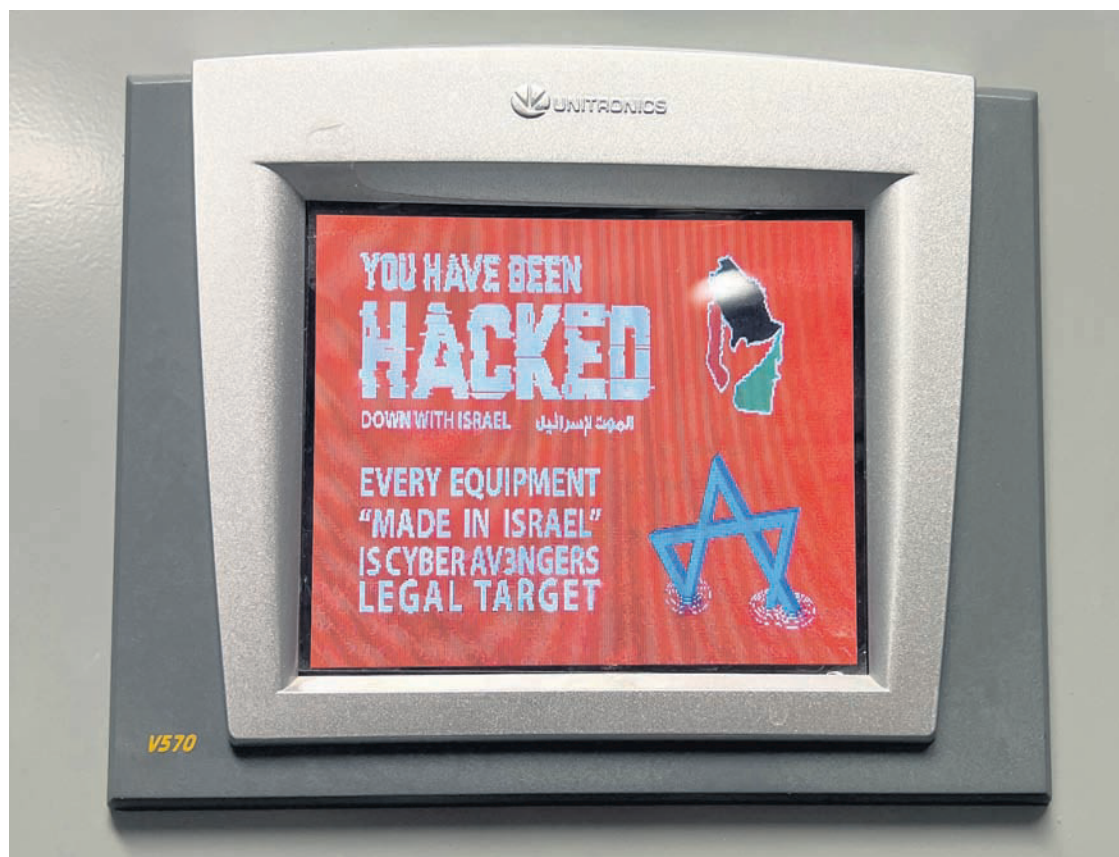
A number of states have sought to step up scrutiny, although water authority advocates say the money and the expertise are what is really lacking for a sector of more than 50,000 water utilities, most of which are local authorities that, like Aliquippa's, serve corners of the country where residents are of modest means and cybersecurity professionals are scarce.

Besides, utilities say, it's difficult to invest in cybersecurity when upkeep of pipes and other water infrastructure is already underfunded, and some cybersecurity measures have been pushed by private water companies, sparking pushback from public authorities that it is being used as a back door to privatization. Efforts took on new urgency in 2021 when the federal government's leading cybersecurity agency reported five attacks on water authorities over two years, four of them ransomware and a fifth by a former employee.

At the Aliquippa authority, Iranian hackers shut down a remotely controlled device that monitors and regulates water pressure at a pumping station. Customers weren't affected because crews alerted by an alarm quickly switched to manual operation — but not every water authority has a built-in manual back-up system.

With inaction in Congress, a handful of states passed legislation to step up scrutiny of cybersecurity, including New Jersey and Tennessee. Before 2021, Indiana and Missouri had passed similar laws.

A 2021 California law com-



This photo provided by the Municipal Water Authority of Aliquippa shows the screen of a Unitronics device that was hacked in Aliquippa, Pa., Saturday, Nov. 25, 2023.

missioned state security agencies to develop outreach and funding plans to improve cybersecurity in the agriculture and water sectors.

Legislation died in several states, including Pennsylvania and Maryland, where public water authorities fought bills backed by private water companies to force them to upgrade various aspects of their infrastructure, including pipes and cybersecurity measures.

Private water companies say the bills would force their public counterparts to abide by the stricter regulatory standards that private companies face from utility commissions and, as a result, boost public confidence in the safety of tap water.

"It's protecting the nation's tap water," said Jennifer Kocher, a spokesperson for the National Association of Water Companies. "It is the most economical choice for most families, but it also has a lack of confidence from a lot of people who think they can drink it and every time there's one of these issues it undercuts the confidence in water and it undercuts people's willingness and trust in drinking it." Opponents said the legisla-

tion is designed to foist burdensome costs onto public authorities and encourage their boards and ratepayers to sell out to private companies that can persuade state utility commissions to raise rates to cover the costs.

"This is a privatization bill," Justin Fiore of the Maryland Municipal League told Maryland lawmakers during a hearing last spring. "They're seeking to take public water companies, privatize them by expanding the burden, cutting out public funding."

For many authorities, the demands of cybersecurity tend to fade into the background of more pressing needs for residents wary of rate increases: aging pipes and increasing costs to comply with clean water regulations.

One critic, Pennsylvania state Sen. Katie Muth, a Democrat from suburban Philadelphia's Montgomery County, criticized a GOP-penned bill for lacking funding.

"People are drinking water that is below standards, but selling out to corporations who are going to raise rates on families across our state who cannot afford it is not a solution," Muth told colleagues during floor de-

bate on a 2022 bill.

Pennsylvania state Rep. Rob Matzie, a Democrat whose district includes the Aliquippa water authority, is working on legislation to create a funding stream to help water and electric utilities pay for cybersecurity upgrades after he looked for an existing funding source and found none.

"The Aliquippa water and sewer authority? They don't have the money," Matzie said in an interview.

In March, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency proposed a new rule to require states to audit the cybersecurity of water systems.

It was short-lived.

Three states — Arkansas, Missouri and Iowa — sued, accusing the agency of overstepping its authority and a federal appeals court promptly suspended the rule. The EPA withdrew the rule in October, although a deputy national security adviser, Anne Neuberger, told The Associated Press that it could have "identified vulnerabilities that were targeted in recent weeks."

Two groups that represent public water authorities, the American Water Works Association and the National Rural Water Associa-

tion, opposed the EPA rule and now are backing bills in Congress to address the issue in different ways.

One bill would roll out a tiered approach to regulation: more requirements for bigger or more complex water utilities.

The other is an amendment to Farm Bill legislation to send federal employees called "circuit riders" into the field to help smaller and rural water systems detect cybersecurity weaknesses and address them.

If Congress does nothing, 6-year-old Safe Drinking Water Act standards will still be in place — a largely voluntary regime that both the EPA and cybersecurity analysts say has yielded minimal progress.

Meanwhile, states are in the midst of applying for grants from a \$1 billion federal cybersecurity program, money from the 2021 federal infrastructure law.

But water utilities will have to compete for the money with other utilities, hospitals, police departments, courts, schools, local governments and others.

Robert M. Lee, CEO of Dragos Inc., which specializes in cybersecurity for industrial-control systems, said the Aliquippa water authority's story — that it had no cybersecurity help — is common.

"That story is tens of thousands of utilities across the country," Lee said.

Because of that, Dragos has begun offering free access to its online support and software that helps detect vulnerabilities and threats for water and electric utilities that draw under \$100 million in revenue.

After Russia attacked Ukraine in 2022, Dragos tested the idea by rolling out software, hardware and installation at a cost of a couple million bucks for 30 utilities.

"It was amazing, the feedback," Lee said. "You wonder, 'Hey I think I can move the needle in this way' ... and those 30 were like, 'Holy crap, no one's ever paid attention to us. No one's ever tried to get us help.'"

Associated Press

Harvard president Claudine Gay resigns amid plagiarism claims, backlash from antisemitism testimony

By **STEVE LeBLANC and COL-LIN BINKLEY**

Associated Press

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP) —

Harvard University President Claudine Gay resigned Tuesday amid plagiarism accusations and criticism over testimony at a congressional hearing where she was unable to say unequivocally that calls on campus for the genocide of Jews would violate the school's conduct policy.

Gay is the second Ivy League president to resign in the past month following the congressional testimony. Gay, Harvard's first Black president, announced her departure just months into her tenure in a letter to the Harvard community.

Following the congressional hearing, Gay's academic career came under intense scrutiny by conservative activists who unearthed several instances of alleged plagiarism in her 1997 doctoral dissertation. Harvard's governing board initially rallied behind Gay, saying a review of her scholarly work turned up "a few instances of inadequate citation" but no evidence of research misconduct.

Days later, the Harvard Corporation revealed that it found two additional examples of "duplicative language without appropriate



Harvard University President Claudine Gay speaks during a hearing of the House Committee on Education on Capitol Hill, Dec. 5, 2023, in Washington.

Associated Press

attribution." The board said Gay would update her dissertation and request corrections.

The Harvard Corporation said the resignation came "with great sadness" and thanked Gay for her "deep and unwavering commitment to Harvard and to the pursuit of academic excellence."

Alan M. Garber, provost and chief academic officer, will serve as interim president until Harvard finds a replacement, the board said in a statement. Garber, an

economist and physician, has served as provost for 12 years.

Gay's resignation was celebrated by the conservatives who put her alleged plagiarism in the national spotlight. Christopher Rufo, an activist who has helped rally the GOP against critical race theory and other cultural issues, said he's "glad she's gone." "Rather than take responsibility for minimizing antisemitism, committing serial plagiarism, intimidating the free press, and damaging the institution, she calls her

critics racist," Rufo said on X, formerly Twitter. Rufo added that "this is the poison" of diversity, equity and inclusion ideology.

Critical race theory is a way of thinking about America's history through the lens of racism. Scholars developed it during the 1970s and 1980s in response to what scholars viewed as a lack of racial progress following the civil rights legislation of the 1960s. It centers on the idea that racism is systemic in the nation's institutions, which function to maintain the domi-

nance of white people in society. Gay, in her letter, said it has been "distressing to have doubt cast on my commitments to confronting hate and to upholding scholarly rigor — two bedrock values that are fundamental to who I am — and frightening to be subjected to personal attacks and threats fueled by racial animus."

But Gay, who is returning to the school's faculty, added "it has become clear that it is in the best interests of Harvard for me to resign so that our community can navigate this moment of extraordinary challenge."

Gay and the presidents of MIT and the University of Pennsylvania came under fire last month for their lawyerly answers to a line of questioning from New York Rep. Elise Stefanik, who asked whether "calling for the genocide of Jews" would violate the colleges' code of conduct.

The three presidents had been called before the Republican-led House Committee on Education and the Workforce to answer accusations that universities were failing to protect Jewish students amid rising fears of antisemitism worldwide and fallout from Israel's intensifying war in Gaza, which faces heightened criticism for the mounting Palestinian death toll. □



A man walks in front of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, Jan. 7, 2015, in New Orleans.

Associated Press

By **MICHAEL GOLDBERG**

Associated Press/Report for America

JACKSON, MISS. (AP) — A federal appeals court has

temporarily delayed Mississippi officials from creating a state-run court in part of the majority-Black capital city of Jackson starting on

Federal appeals court temporarily delays new state-run court in Mississippi's majority-Black capital

Monday. The ruling came just before U.S. District Judge Henry Wingate dismissed requests to block the new court in a ruling filed late Sunday. The U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals granted a temporary administrative stay, blocking the court's creation until at least Jan. 5. The decision followed a request from the NAACP. "The NAACP stands firm in our belief that this legislation is inherently undemocratic," NAACP spokesperson Alicia Mer-

cedes said in a statement Monday. "We will continue to do everything in our power to fight for Jackson residents' rights to have control over their own institutions and live free from state-driven discrimination." Michelle Williams, chief of staff for Mississippi Attorney General Lynn Fitch, responded to the decision by pointing to a statement she issued Sunday that said the state would continue to defend the law and "perform our duties to help pro-

tect the people of Jackson from stifling, suffocating crime that plagues the city." The court was created by the majority-white and Republican-controlled Mississippi Legislature. Jackson is governed by Democrats. Attorneys for the civil rights organization had sued on behalf of several Jackson residents, saying the new court undermines democracy because local voters or local elected officials won't choose its judge or prosecutors. □

Planes collide and catch fire at Japan's busy Haneda airport, killing 5

By **FOSTER KLUG** and **MARI YAMAGUCHI**

Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — A large passenger plane and a Japanese coast guard aircraft collided on the runway at Tokyo's Haneda Airport on Tuesday and burst into flames, killing five people aboard the coast guard plane, officials said.

All 379 people on Japan Airlines flight JAL-516 got out safely before the Airbus A350 was fully engulfed in flames, Transport Minister Tetsuo Saito confirmed.

The pilot of the coast guard's Bombardier Dash-8 plane escaped but the five crew members died, Saito said. The aircraft was preparing to take off to deliver aid to an area affected by a major earthquake on Monday, officials said.

Television footage showed an orange fireball erupting from the Japan Airlines plane as it collided with the coast guard aircraft while landing, and the airliner then spewed smoke from its side as it continued down the runway. Within 20 minutes, all passengers and crew members slid down emergency chutes to get away. As firefighters tried to put out the blaze with streams of water, the area around the plane's wing caught fire. The flames spread throughout the plane, which eventually collapsed. The fire was put out about six hours later. Tuesday's accident was the first time that an Airbus A350, among the industry's newest large passenger planes, was severely damaged. It entered commercial service in 2015. Airbus in a statement said it was sending specialists to help Japanese and French authorities and that the plane was delivered to Japan Airlines in late 2021. The A350 had flown from Shin Chitose airport near the city of Sapporo, the transport minister said.

JAL Managing Executive Officer Tadayuki Tsutsumi told a news conference late Tuesday that the A350 was making a "normal entry and landing" on the runway, without specifying how it collided with the coast guard plane. Noriyuki Aoki, also a managing executive officer

at JAL, said that the airline's understanding is that the JAL flight had received permission to land from aviation control officials.

Police are expected to investigate the accident on suspicion of professional negligence, NHK television reported.

Coast guard spokesperson Yoshinori Yanagishima said its Bombardier Dash-8 plane, which is based at Haneda, had been due to head to Niigata to deliver relief goods to residents affected by a deadly earthquake in the region on Monday. The turbo-prop Dash-8 is widely used on short-haul and commuter flights.

The coast guard pilot reported to his base that his aircraft exploded after colliding with the commercial plane, Vice Commander Yoshio Seguchi told reporters. Shigenori Hiraoka, head of the Transport Ministry Civil Aviation Bureau, said the collision occurred when the JAL plane landed on one of Haneda's four runways where the coast guard aircraft was preparing to take off. Transport safety officials were analyzing communication between aviation control officials and the two aircraft and planned to interview JAL officials to determine what led to the collision.

Hiraoka praised JAL for "taking appropriate procedures" to safely evacuate all passengers and crew members. Swede Anton Deibe, 17, a passenger on the Japan Airlines plane, told Swedish newspaper Aftonbladet that "the entire cabin was filled with smoke within a few minutes. We threw ourselves down on the floor. Then the emergency doors were opened and we threw ourselves at them."

"The smoke in the cabin stung like hell. It was a hell. We have no idea where we are going so we just run out into the field. It was chaos," Deibe added.

Another passenger told NHK television that cabin attendants were calm and told everyone to leave their baggage behind, then all lights went off and the temperature inside the cabin started rising. The passenger said she

was afraid she might not get off the plane alive.

All passengers and crew members slid down the escape chutes within 20 minutes from the landing and survived. Some passengers told media interviews that they felt relieved only after reaching a grassy area beyond the tarmac.

JAL said four passengers were taken to a medical facility, and that the airline is checking for injuries. NHK said 14 other people were injured.

The transport minister said officials were doing their utmost to prevent any delays in the delivery of relief goods and other operations for the disaster-hit region. Transport officials said the airport's three other runways had reopened.



In this image made from video, a Japan Airlines plane is on fire on the runway of Haneda airport on Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2024 in Tokyo, Japan.

Associated Press

Haneda is the busier of two major airports serving the Japanese capital, with many international and transcontinental flights. It is particularly favored by business travelers due to its proximity to central

parts of the city. The twin-engine, twin-aisle A350 is used by a number of long-haul international carriers. More than 570 of the aircraft are in operation, according to Airbus. □

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South Korean opposition leader is stabbed in the neck

By **HYUNG-JIN KIM** and **JIWON SONG**

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)

— South Korea's tough-speaking liberal opposition leader, Lee Jae-myung, was stabbed in the neck Tuesday by an unidentified knife-wielding man who attempted to kill the politician during his visit to the south-eastern city of Busan, police said.

Lee, 59, the head of the main opposition Democratic Party, was airlifted to a Seoul hospital after receiving emergency treatment in Busan. Lee's party later said he was recovering at an intensive care unit at the Seoul National University Hospital following a two-hour operation.

The attack happened as Lee walked through a crowd of journalists and others after a tour of the proposed site of a new airport in Busan. The attacker approached Lee, saying he wanted his autograph, then stabbed him in the left side of his neck, senior Busan police officer Sohn Jae-han said in a briefing.

Sohn said Democratic Party officials quickly subdued the attacker before police officers detained him. He said 41 police officers had been



South Korean opposition leader Lee Jae-myung is seen after he was injured in Busan, South Korea, Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2024.

deployed to the area for crowd control and traffic management.

TV footage showed Lee, his eyes closed, lying on the ground as a person pressed a handkerchief to his neck. A witness, Jin Jeong-hwa, told YTN television that Lee had bled a lot.

Videos circulated on social media showed the suspect, wearing a paper crown reading "I'm Lee Jae-myung," in a possible attempt to pose as a sup-

porter.

Sohn said the suspect, aged about 67, told investigators that he bought the 18-centimeter (7-inch) knife online. He said police are investigating the motive for the attack.

Other officers confirmed to The Associated Press that police are expected to request that the suspect be formally arrested for alleged attempted murder because he told investigators he intended to kill Lee.

Lee's Democratic Party called the incident "a terrorist attack on Lee and a serious threat to democracy." It called on police to make a thorough, swift investigation. At the Seoul National University Hospital, party spokesperson Kwon Chil-seung told reporters that Lee's jugular vein was damaged and that he had a medical procedure called revascularization. Kwon cited the hospital, whose public affairs office refused to disclose Lee's

status, citing privacy rules.

Police and emergency officials earlier said Lee was conscious after the attack and wasn't in critical condition.

President Yoon Suk Yeol expressed deep concern about Lee's health and ordered authorities to investigate the attack, saying such violence would not be tolerated, according to Yoon's office.

Lee lost the 2022 presidential election to Yoon by 0.7 percentage points, the narrowest margin recorded in a South Korean presidential election.

Recent public surveys indicated Lee and his main conservative rival Han Dong-hoon, a former justice minister, are the two early favorites to succeed Yoon as president when his single five-year term ends in 2027. Since his defeat, Lee has been a harsh critic of Yoon's major policies. Last year, Lee held a 24-day hunger strike to protest what he called Yoon's failure to oppose Japan's release of treated radioactive wastewater from its crippled Fukushima nuclear power, his handling of the country's post-pandemic economy and his hard-line policies on North Korea. □

Associated Press



Rohingya refugees residing in Sri Lanka protest outside the UN's refugee agency office in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2024.

Associated Press

By **KRISHAN FRANCIS**

Associated Press

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)

— A group of Rohingya refugees living in Sri Lanka staged a protest outside the office of the U.N. refugee agency Tuesday, saying

they fear losing their living allowance once the agency's office in the island nation closes at the end of this year. The protesters also want to be resettled in another country because Sri Lanka does not allow them to live

Rohingya refugees in Sri Lanka protest planned closure of U.N. office, fearing abandonment

there permanently.

About 100 Rohingya refugees live in Sri Lanka, most of them rescued at sea by the navy while they were trying to reach Indonesia after fleeing Myanmar for Bangladesh.

About 740,000 Rohingya were resettled in Bangladesh after fleeing their homes in Myanmar to escape a brutal counterinsurgency campaign by security forces. But the camps in Bangladesh are squalid, with surging gang violence and rampant hunger, leading many to flee again.

Ruki Fernando, a rights activist in Sri Lanka, said the refu-

gees receive basic allowance from the U.N. agency and are provided with limited health care by the Sri Lankan government. However, the refugee children don't receive education and adults aren't allowed to work.

"We didn't intend to come to Sri Lanka, but were rescued off the seas in Sri Lanka and brought to Sri Lanka by the navy. We also had to endure a hard time in detention in Sri Lanka and still live a very hard life in a new country where we can't speak our language, and many don't have family members, relatives and friends," the refu-

gees said in a petition to the U.N. agency's representative.

The petition said the refugees were upset to learn of the office's upcoming closure and pleaded for it to "help us find a permanent solution in another country that will help us overcome uncertainty and not make us and our children permanently stateless." The U.N. refugee agency could not immediately be reached Tuesday.

The office in Sri Lanka was especially active during the country's quarter-century civil war which ended in 2009. □



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Visit the island's hidden natural pools

(Oranjestad)—Amongst the countless beaches surrounding the island that are well-known and frequently visited, there are an additional two “hidden” natural pools that are situated in the northern coast of the island, two ideal stops in your tour itinerary.

Conchi (Natural Pool)

For many years, Conchi was the only natural pool that we had on the island. Located in the Arikok National Park, near Boca Keto and the Daimari Ranch,

Conchi—also known “Cura di Turtuga (Turtle’s Cove) or just Natural Pool—is reachable with any 4x4 vehicle or by foot if you’re up for a long hike. However, since it is part of the National Park, you must first get permission from park management to enter. You would have to purchase a day pass, and receive a wristband as proof of payment. Once you’ve completed that, you are set!

If you decide to hike from the entrance of the Arikok

National Park, this is also possible: do bring plenty of protective clothing and enough water and food—it could take you up to three hours to hike there!

However, when you eventually do get there, you will be greeted with crystal blue water surrounded by a natural rock formation that protects you from the wild waves on the other side. Though the pool is located on the northern side of the island (where the sea is largely rough and largely no suitable for swimming), the pool itself is very calm. It’s also relatively deep, and you can climb up the rocks and jump in!

Cave Pool

This relatively new pool appeared just a few years ago, when a part of the dried up coral floor broke off and created a partition between the ocean and what is now the natural pool that is hidden there.



Because it’s still so new, there is no official name for it, but most people just call it the cave pool.

Just like the Conchi, the new natural pool is situated on the northern coast of Aruba. However, this pool is much easier to reach with any type of vehicle, and there is no hiking needed. This spot has also become a regular stop for touring visitors.

When you get there, maybe you won’t be able to spot the pool immediately, because you will probably notice the moon-shaped

lagoon where wild northern waves crash into each other. Sounds scary, but if you look down on your right, you’ll see a calm, crystal blue little pool in the corner. To get there, you have to climb down some stairs. Be careful when climbing down and follow the instructions of your tour guide if you have one.

And just like Conchi, this pool also has a jumping spot, and a rope to climb back up the boulder.

Picture of cave pool is credited to RockaBeach Tours



Aruban snacks and where to find them

ORANJESTAD — Want to taste something different for a change? How about some Aruban snacks that you can find all around the island? Hop in your car, and go to these locations to find some of the most popular and tasty snacks that are beloved by our locals.

One of the staples of Aruban cuisine and snacks is the Pastechi. Pastechi is a Caribbean fried pastry that is filled with cheese, meat, chicken, veggies and sometimes even fish! Or perhaps you might want to try a croquette, locally called a “kroket,” which is a crusty fried snack with typically a meat and dough mix filling. The Aruban kroket is based on its Dutch counterpart, the “bitterbal”.

These two snacks are typically found in all local snack trucks, which can be found all over the island, including on the side of the main road that stretches from San Nicolas to the Hotel Area. You can also find pastechis and krokets at local bakeries and snack shops, like Bright Bakery in Piedra Plat, Huchada in Santa Cruz or

Pastechi House in the city center. These places may also sell other snacks and sandwiches too, perfect for on-the-road lunch break.

While you’re at it, why not accompany your snack with a refreshing “batido”? Batidos are fruit shakes, typically made with added milk for some creaminess. However, you can also ask to hold the milk. Batidos are commonly found in snack shops too. You may find some batido shops next the flea markets downtown, or if you’re on your way to San Nicolas, at Mauchi Smoothies and Juice Bar in Savaneta (located at the side of the main road).

If you are looking for something a bit more fresh and healthy, why not try some coconuts, or shaved ice from local vendors? These vendors carry their little shop at the back of their truck, so they are ever-moving around the island. However, there are a few spots where you can almost always find a coconut/shaved ice vendor:

1. Right next to the Red Anchor in San



Nicolas, on the way to Baby Beach.

2. Along the main road next to the airport field.
3. At the California Light House.
4. At the Alto Vista Chapel.

These vendors may also sell other delights, like the beloved coconut-based dessert “cocada” or peanuts. All in all, in Aruba, you can always find some place to take a break and have a bite of something local, you maybe just might have to look for them!

Photo credit: wheninaruba.com



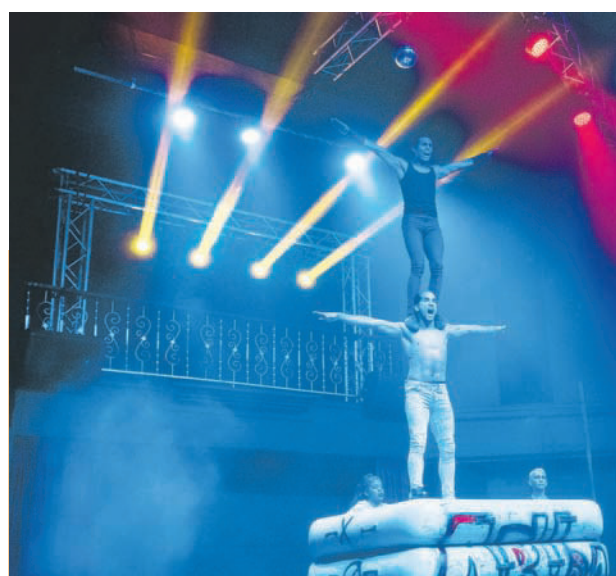
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Rhythms Circus Company Aruba: putting Aruba's name on the world stage



Rhythms Circus Company Aruba is a talented group of young people working daily to present their art in the form of acrobatics, dancing, acting and singing. After an impactful participation in one of America's biggest talent shows, they are now bringing their amazing talent to Aruba!

In a show full of light, music, and with performances to famous musical figures like Elvis Presley, Michael Jackson and Tina Turner, the group consisting of 15 people from various countries delights the audience with their artistic prowess at the Paseo Herencia Mall, every Wednesday and Friday starting at 7pm. Each day has a different show, so you can attend both nights for the complete experience!

RCCA also offers the possibility for you and your family to enjoy dinner before the show! Starting from 6pm, you and your family can delight from the wide-ranged menu that includes a variation of delicious main course meals complete with a delectable flan dessert as a sweet treat. Enjoy your dinner even more at a VIP table complete with comfort seating!

The group, under the leadership of directors and creators Diego Jaramillo and Yamila Hernandez are opening the doors to the ballroom to our local audience as well as our visitors so that everyone can have the privilege of experiencing this wonderful show.

Hernandez explained that the idea for this project started in 2010 when she came to work in Aruba. After being on the island for a while she decided to stay and live here, and she met Diego Jaramillo, who is currently her partner. Together they came with the idea to establish a company together with other professional artists, with the goal of living from their art.

Hernandez says that the work is hard – all of the performers are professional artists, and while the production of the show is not a challenge for them, selling the idea proved difficult since at the time, there weren't any shows of its kind on the island.


America's Got Talent

Currently they are offering a show with music, choreography and at the end, they have

a shocking acrobatics ending, one that was seen by thousands of people around the world when the group travelled to Los Angeles in the United States to represent Aruba in America's Got Talent. Hernandez said that the show was very important for them to meet the public present because people could experience this performance live and right before their eyes.

Their presentation in America's Got Talent "was incredible" and they were able to meet the jury and many other artists staying there for three months. But the exhaustion and physical toll was so great that Diego suffered an accident, and because of this, they had to cancel all future commitments.

Reservations and tickets

To make a reservation to see this incredible display of creativity and acrobatics, scan the QR code which will take you directly to their website for a booking. To find more information about RCCA, please visit their Instagram page @rccaruba. 

Aruba Tourism Authority honors loyal visitors at Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. These honorees were honored with a certificate acknowledging their years of visits,

loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to

say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)


The honorees were:
Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba
Mr. Robert & Mrs. Joanne Marsala from New York, United States.

Ms. Marouska Heyliger representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Marriott Resort &

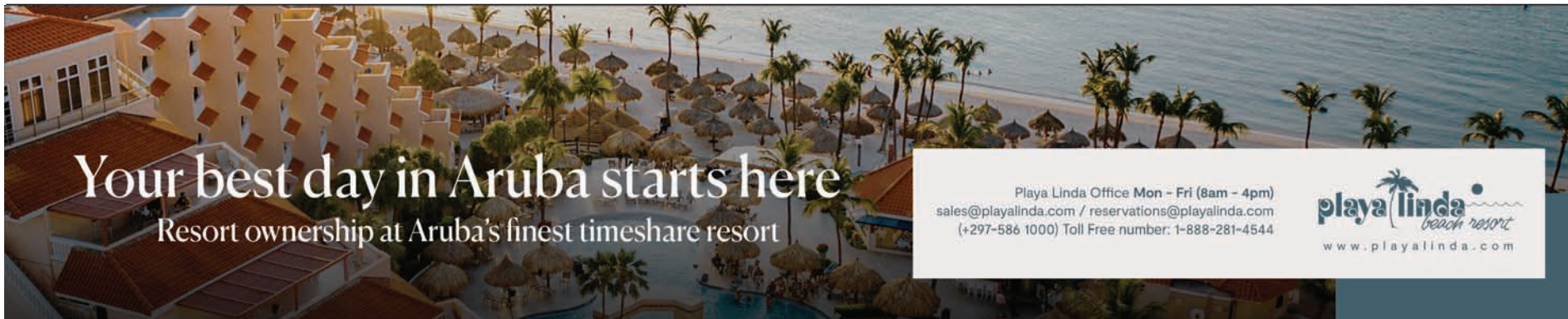
Stellaris Casino bestowed the certificate to the honorees, presented them with memorable gifts, and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their best-loved vacation destination, as their home away from home.

Top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

Aruba's warm people
Aruba's warm weather
Aruba's beauty
"Direct flights"
Aruba's beaches

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island". 





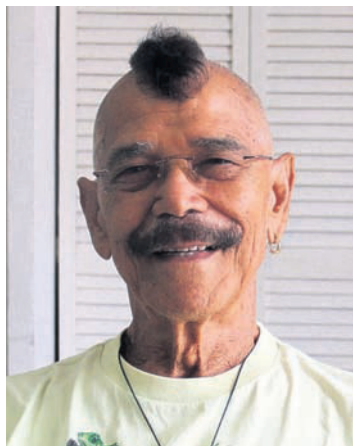
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A brief history of the California Light House

(Oranjestad)—At the furthest western point of the island, there lies the tallest structure on the island: The California Light House. Standing on top of a limestone cliff, this lighthouse oversees the entire island, offering one of few best views of the island and the surrounding sea. It is also one of the few monuments that hold a rich history.



The lighthouse was constructed in between 1914-1916, and its first keeper was a young trained lighthouse keeper from Curacao names Jacob Jacobs. Mr. Frederico Fingal was the last man to have occupied this position until 1962. Though his son, Mr. Romulo Fingal did not continue in his father's footsteps, he does have a special connection to the lighthouse. He sat down with our reporter and shared a bit of its history.

As Mr. Fingal explains, "In 1915, cargo donkeys were hired from Figaroa di Noord to help build the Light-house at Westpunt. The donkeys had to walk along the beach all the way to Westpunt carrying the cargo, poles, cement, and all these things. At that time, it was a difficult task until Aruba got its first truck. These things reflect how people could have accomplished this tremendous job with so little." Mr. Fingal said, "At that time, it wasn't a place for people to work. It was very challenging because it was full of goats and donkeys, and it was very isolated. There were no hotels or roads to get there. There was only a donkey trail. Those were the only means of transportation."

Mr. Fingal continues, "In 1939, I was born in the light-

house, and my father was the last lighthouse keeper until he retired in 1962. After that, they removed the power cables all the way to the top. According to the story, we couldn't have the light ourselves because they dismantled it, and after many years, I heard that it is in a train museum in San Nicolas, where we found this very special lens that, when the light shines through it, it reaches 30 kilometers out to sea." Mr. Fingal told our reporter.

The lighthouse has a long and very interesting history. The reason why the lighthouse was built, according to Mr. Fingal, dates back to the day when the cargo ship S.S. California sank because of the lack of light. In 1913, Aruba made a request to Curacao to build a Lighthouse at Westpunt, and the governor of Curacao responded to Aruba to come back in 1915 with a well-detailed plan. "During the First World War from 1914 to 1918, they had to wait for the light to be transported to Aruba because it was manufactured in France. At that time, there was no electricity, and the light was very interesting because it rotated with a kerosene lamp that planes used; clean kerosene," Mr. Fingal said.

Mr. Fingal discovered

something very interesting about the lighthouse after much research was documented in his book 'History of the Lighthouse at Westpunt.' He found many details: "I found out that the height of the lighthouse was due to the absence of electricity. There was also the presence of coral. There is a long steel cable from where the light is, and under the light, at the highest point, there is a hanging weight, a sort of pendulum that swings like that, with a weight that measures about 1 meter by 30 centimeters wide, which is a block of solid iron attached to a cable. When you release it upwards, it comes down, and the weight that comes down pulls it up, gradually. And while it comes down, the same weight that is descending causes many small wheels to turn in the opposite direction. The Lighthouse rotates from 6 pm in the evening, when the sun sets, until 6 am in the morning. During the entire night, the light shines on the lantern, it goes down 24 meters, and the Lighthouse is 30 meters high. It is designed not to collapse," Mr. Fingal explains.

Mr. Fingal further explains that in one night, the lighthouse rotates 4,320 times and consumes one gallon of kerosene for the whole operation. "At that time, the kerosene was supplied from the Lago refinery. Every day it was brought down, and to start the light again, they had to lift the weight up, so our job as children was to crank it and raise the weight back up in the evening when the light stuck, they would take it down again, and the light stayed down. That's how it worked for a very long



time," Mr. Fingal explains.

Thanks to the Monument Fund Aruba, which worked hard and is currently in charge of the Lighthouse, Mr. Fingal is very happy

with its preservation, along with all the renovations that have taken place. He hopes that the story of the lighthouse will continue to live on for future generations. □



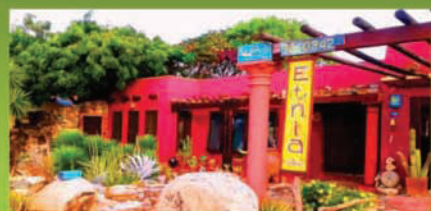
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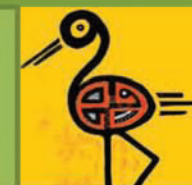
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Chitons, ancient armored molluscs

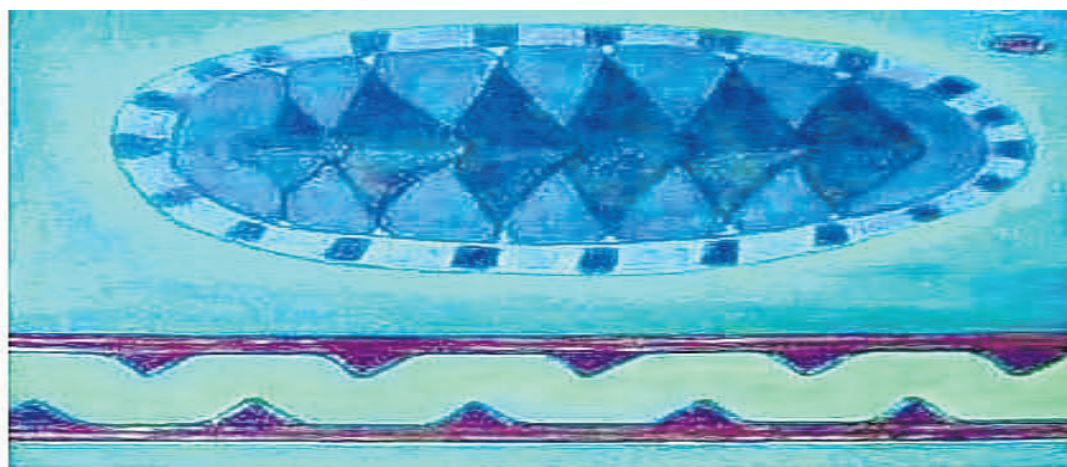
Episode CCXXXIX– 239

Each week, Etnia Nativa presents a new episode about cultural heritage, focusing on native knowledge, transcendental wisdom, and the importance of defending the true identity of Aruba. It connects the reader to that mystical aspect of the island's culture and traditions, encouraging everyone to interact with our unique environment. In this episode, it talks about chitons, which are marine molluscs of varying size in the class Polyplacophora, and about 940 extant and 430 fossil species are recognized. In Aruba we know the chiton as clecan.

Chitons are exclusively marine animals that live worldwide, from cold waters through to the tropics, on and under rocks. Some species are exposed to the air and light for long periods of time. If you look closely at the rocky shores, you will surely discover some of them.

All chitons bear a protective dorsal shell that is divided into eight articulating aragonite valves embedded in the tough muscular girdle that surrounds the chiton's body. Compared with the shells of other mollusks, this arrangement allows chitons to roll into a protective ball when dislodged and to cling tightly to irregular surfaces. It has considerable adhesion power and can cling to rocks very powerfully, like a limpet.

Chitons are generally herbivorous grazers, feeding on algae, bryozoans, diatoms, barnacles, and sometimes bacteria by scraping the rocky substrate with their well-developed radulae, a kind of micro-tooth.



A few species of chitons are predatory, and they catch other small invertebrates, such as shrimp and possibly even small fish, by holding the enlarged, hood-like front end of the griddle up off the surface and then clamping down on unsuspecting, shelter-seeking prey.

Fertilization is usually external and takes place in the surrounding water. The male releases sperm into the water, while the female releases eggs either individually or in a long string. The eggs have a tough, spiny coat and usually hatch to release a free-swimming trochophore larva. When the larva is ready to become an adult, the body elongates, and the gland cells secrete the plates of the shell. After a chiton dies, the individual valves that make up the eight-part shell come apart because the girdle is no longer holding them together, and then the plates sometimes wash up in beach drift.

The individual shell plates of a chiton are sometimes known as butterfly shells due to their shape. Several species of chiton are known to exhibit homing behaviors, journeying to feed and then returning to the exact spot they previously inhabited. The method they use to perform such behaviors remains unknown. One theory has the chitons remembering the topographic profile of the region, thus being able to

guide themselves back to their home scar with a physical knowledge of the rocks and visual input from their numerous primitive eyespots. They may leave chemical cues along the rock surface, which their olfactory senses can detect and home in on.

Chitons are eaten in various parts of the world; in Aruba, the custom of eating them comes from our ancestors, who loved the energy they obtained by eating them raw. Many pieces of local chiton shells can be found at archaeological sites.

If you discover a chiton in a rock and your curiosity gets the better of you, then you should be careful when trying to move it, as it is possible to damage the chiton if you are too rough.

So if you are interested in connecting and really know all about your travel destination: our flora, fauna, geology, history, autochthonous art, as well as the true identity of the island. □

You should book a visit to Etnia Nativa, a unique native gem! Let Anthony, our acclaimed cultural columnist, guide and lecture you regarding the most interesting and revealing stories about Aruba's undiscovered native ethnicity, an adventure beyond beaches and tourist traps. Visit his magnificent dwelling that integrates reused materials with nature bursting with culture and island heritage! Whats App +297 592 2702 etnianativa03@gmail.com

Fruit Loose & Veggie Boost: Aruban fruits and vegetables

Fresh fruits make a tropical holiday's picture complete. Whether you see the mangoes hanging in the trees or the fresh fruit cocktail on the side table of your pool bed, the link is there: you are in the tropics. Aruba grows her own fruits and veggies and there are some pretty out-of-space local species you may never had heard of, but really healthy and delicious.

Mispel

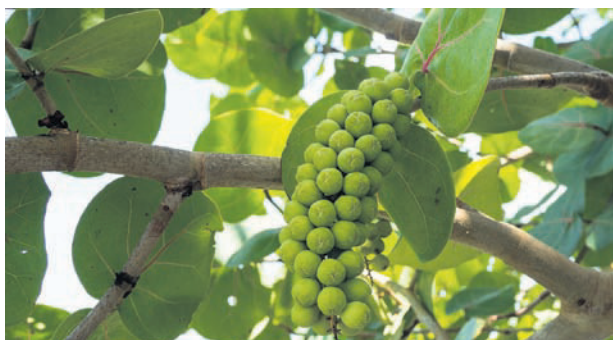
This is a fruit with a character (5-10 cm/2-4 inches). It does not ripe until it is picked or falls off the tree. Mispel is hard with a sandpaper like texture when immature, soft and juicy when ripe. It's technically a berry, but contains a skin similar to that of a kiwi. It's grainy and sweet, with a light, musky flavor. The sap or gum from the tree is also a source of 'chicle' the original ingredient used to make chewing gum. Rich in tannins, antioxidants shown to contain anti-inflammatory compounds, and vitamin C, essential for healthy immune function. Season: year-round.

Kenepa



Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa strengthens the immune system, and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

Druif



There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of

fruit that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

Shimarucu



Maybe Aruba's most popular wild fruit tree. You may have noticed cars at the side of the road and people picking those red berries. Well, that's Shimarucu. The local habit to stop for these delicious fruits goes from generation to generation. Its fruit's degree of sour depends on the amount of rain it gets. Red Shimarucus tend to taste better than orange. The fruit has super power: a true vitamin bomb. Adults only need to eat 3-4 of these berries to meet their daily recommended amount of Vitamin C. Season: Rainy months (Oct-Jan).

Tamarind



A delicious, sweet fruit that has a wide variety of uses and applications, both for medicinal and culinary purposes. It is a medium-sized bushy tree with evergreen leaves and fruit that develops in pods characterized by long, brown shells. Inside is a sticky, fleshy, juicy pulp, which is the Tamarind fruit. Both sweet and sour in taste, the fruit contains a significant level of vitamin C, as well as vitamin E, B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorous, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. There are also a number of organic compounds that make tamarind a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. Season: March.

When it comes to veggies the island certainly offers a home-grown selection. They taste delicious and have their specific talents to boost your immune system. Start the day with a 'batida' (smoothie) enriched with a local veggie touch or select your restaurant that offers local vegetable dishes to get the real pure taste of it.

Comcomber chiquito

This is a sort of local squash, but looks like a cucumber with prickly skin. The taste however is bitterer than the cucumber and the vegetable is smaller in size but bigger in width. Inside is a soft, fleshy pulp and seeds, just like the cucumber. Comcomber chiquito is grown in the island and used in salads and 'stoba' (stew) or on its own in vinegar. The veggie contains multiple B vitamins, including vitamin B1, vitamin B5, and vitamin B7 (biotin). B vitamins are known to help ease feelings of anxiety and buffer some of the damaging effects of stress. Additionally this veggie is rich in two of the most basic elements needed for healthy digestion: water and fiber. Season: year-round.

Yambo

Family of Okra, also known as 'lady's fingers': a green flowering plant. Okra belongs to the same plant family as hibiscus and cotton. A classic favorite dish in Aruba is Sopi di yambo. It has long been favored as a food for the health-conscious. It contains potassium, vitamin B, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium. It's low in calories and has a high dietary fiber content. Recently, a new benefit of including okra in your diet is being considered. Okra has been suggested to help manage blood sugar in cases of type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes. Season: year-round.

Bonch'i Cunucu

A long, small bean, boiled for a side dish or snack. Long beans have a chewy, crunchy texture—more so than snap beans—and a flavor reminiscent of the dry navy bean or asparagus. Besides stir-fry, soups and salads, the long bean is a good choice for stewing, braising (to remain chewy and firm), sautéing, shallow frying, and deep frying. With cooking, the long bean's bean flavor intensifies. Long beans are low in calories, about 45 calories per cup, and rich in vitamin A and also contain vitamin C and potassium. Season: year-round.

Pampuna



In the endless summer of Caribbean living we only have to concern ourselves with a wet season and a dry season. Still we do indulge heavily in the pleasures of pumpkin and enjoy Caribbean pumpkin recipes year round. A popular dish in Aruban restaurants is Sopa Di Pampuna, don't miss it. This dish is made of pumpkin soup, and parsley. Pumpkins are rich in flavonoid polyphenolic antioxidants such as xanthin, lutein and carotenes and also contain vitamins. Pumpkin seeds are a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and proteins. Pumpkins are used to make desserts, breads and soups. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

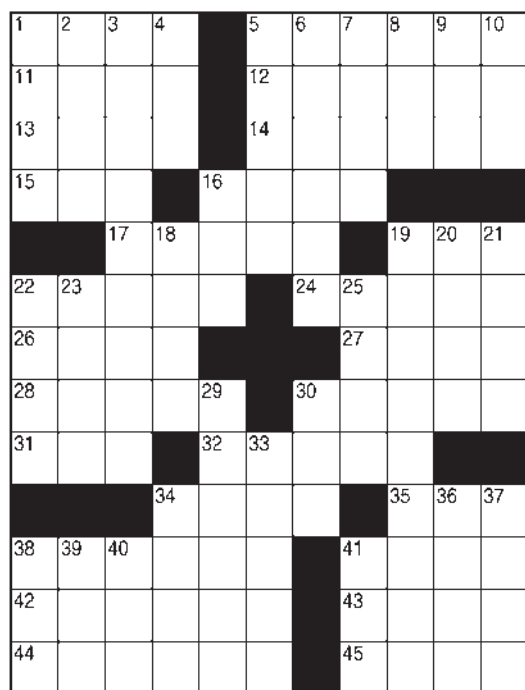
- 1 Frenzied
- 5 Pollux's twin
- 11 Fired
- 12 Some time
- 13 Sell
- 14 Grimacing, perhaps
- 15 Picnic invader
- 16 Sink problem
- 17 Poor sport's cry
- 19 Sleep attire, for short
- 22 Scalawag
- 24 Base runner's act
- 26 Taj Mahal city
- 27 Take apart
- 28 Does in
- 30 Duo quadrupled
- 31 Skirt edge
- 32 Winter coat
- 34 Idiotic
- 35 Procured
- 38 Outcry, in Britain
- 41 Spur on
- 42 Warring woman
- 43 Flight cost
- 44 Tack on
- 45 Troubling sign

DOWN

- 1 Hot flow
- 2 Farm team
- 3 Metric mass unit
- 4 Unusual
- 5 Island off Naples
- 6 Looks forward to
- 7 Galleon, e.g.
- 8 Badge material
- 9 Pamplona cry
- 10 Traffic stopper
- 16 Expected
- 18 Wharf
- 19 Five-pointed figure
- 20 Green gem
- 21 Place for a coin
- 22 Reckless
- 23 Look lewdly
- 25 Diving position
- 29 Incite
- 30 Sphere
- 33 Improve, in a way
- 34 Take a nap
- 36 Shrek, for one
- 37 New driver, usually
- 38 Pilot-policing org.
- 39 Strike caller
- 40 Grammys category
- 41 Saucer, perhaps



Yesterday's answer



1-3

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

1-3

CRYPTOQUOTE

CW KZW WKPY XEYWZ'M
YKZUWME; CW KZW WKPY
XEYWZ'M ARMTQWMM; CW
KZW WKPY XEYWZ'M
DKFQTERNW KQN AXQN.
— FCWQN XVBQ AZXXHM
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LOVE. — WALLY LAMB

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Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.
Acc. #23951903
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

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2 Bed Garden view \$10,000
3 Bed Ocean view \$20,000

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1 Bed Ocean View \$14,500

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Questions to contemplate for a new year on PGA Tour

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP Golf Writer

Of the two clear signs the PGA Tour is about to embark on a new year at Kapalua, one is obvious: The magnificent view from the first tee of an 80-yard fairway that seemingly drops into the Pacific Ocean.

The other is more bizarre: Jon Rahm sightings.

Rahm is the defending champion at The Sentry, except that all he has been defending of late is his decision to defect to Saudi-funded LIV Golf. The total compensation is probably in the neighborhood of the entire PGA Tour prize fund for the FedEx Cup season (\$402.4 million, not including the majors).

There has been chatter about his vacation suite at Kapalua and one confirmed sighting of the Masters champion at a high-end resort up the coast at Makena.

Such beautiful vistas, such a fractured landscape in golf, with no end in sight.

The previous year began with LIV adding players that only ardent golf fans would recognize. Six months later came the shocking announcement of the PGA Tour's agreement to become commercial partners with the Saudi backer of LIV Golf, contingent on finalizing the deal by the end of the year.

Seven hours before the year ended, PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan told players in a memo that there was no deal yet, only progress. Slow play strikes again.

So the new year has the feel of the old one, except on Thursday. The Sentry has ditched the second part of its title name — Tournament of Champions — because the winners-only



PGA Commissioner Jay Monahan on the first tee box during the first round of the Tour Championship golf tournament at East Lake Golf Club, Thursday, Aug. 24, 2023, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

field now includes anyone who finished in the top 50 in the FedEx Cup.

The only player missing is Rory McIlroy — and Rahm, who has been suspended. What to expect for 2024? Here are questions to contemplate:

The Saudi Deal

Whatever defines progress was slowed by Commissioner Jay Monahan taking a month away to cope with exhaustion, congressional inquiries and private equity groups wanting a piece of the action. The PGA Tour settled on Strategic Sports Group, and Monahan suggested a deal with SSG was farther along than anything with the Public Investment Fund.

Monahan also mentioned SSG, PIF and the European tour as minority co-investors. Golf Digest reported any agreement ideally would be completed by The Players Championship

in March. There is no hard deadline, and it turns out Dec. 31 was just a date on a piece of paper.

Regardless of valuations and contributions by "minority co-investors," the biggest question is the future of LIV Golf and how and when — or if — the best players will be competing against each other outside the majors.

Finding a fair way to integrate is one thing. Rewarding the players who remained loyal to the tours would seem to be far more complicated.

Who's Next To Leave?

Still to be confirmed is whether Rahm gets his own LIV team, and there are still moving parts among the 12 existing teams. Either way, the year starts high on speculation about who will be the next to defect to LIV. Brooks Koepka leaving in 2022 and Rahm leaving in December should make it clear that no departure should be a surprise. Everyone has a number.

Who will be the next Adam Schenk?

Schenk had never finished higher than No. 71 in the FedEx Cup in his five years on the PGA Tour. He had played in only two majors. He started the season at No. 176 in the world.

That adage about playing better? That applies to Schenk.

He was runner-up twice, including a playoff loss at Colonial. He played his way into three majors. He not only qualified for the Tour Championship, he was in contention going into the second round at East Lake. He finished the year just short of \$5 million, more than his previous five seasons combined. He is in all the signature events this year, along with all the majors. For players who are not in the signature events, who feel as though there is now a separate tour for the elite, they should use Schenk as inspiration. That could be them.

Who will be the next Justin Thomas?

Thomas is the best example that even elite players have to earn it. He didn't in 2023, missing out on the postseason for the first time. He will not be suffering because of his star power. Thomas earned that from winning two majors, a FedEx Cup and three money titles. Sponsor exemptions to the signature events will not be hard to find if he needs them.

That player a few years back was Rickie Fowler. Before him was Jordan Spieth.

Who makes it to Paris for the Olympics?

The toughest squad to make in golf is the U.S. Olympic team, even if it's not a team event. Only four players from the top 15 in the world can go to Paris for the Summer Olympics. Going into the year, eight Americans are among the top 15.

Xander Schauffele is one of them. He won the gold medal in Tokyo and the first step is simply getting a shot at any medal. Justin Rose won the gold in Rio de Janeiro and didn't make it back to the next Olympics. It gets even more complicated with international players, particularly the likes of Cameron Smith of Australia, Joaquin Niemann of Chile and Thomas Pieters of Belgium. Olympic qualifying is based strictly on the world ranking, and LIV doesn't get points for that. Their only chance at points is the majors, if they are even eligible for them. Who will caddie for Tiger Woods?

Woods gave his blessing to Joe LaCava, his caddie since late 2011, to work for Patrick Cantlay when Woods had ankle fusion surgery in April and his future was murky as ever.

Woods is optimistic that he can play once a month, starting in February, through the majors. Rob McNamara, a longtime business associate and a second set of eyes for his swing, worked at the Hero World Challenge and is a likely candidate for Riviera. Woods has used an Augusta National caddie for pre-Masters practice rounds. That's an option.

And then there's his son, 14-year-old Charlie. He's strong enough and could be an interesting choice for the U.S. Open and British Open (he might not be out of school in time for the PGA Championship).

For regular caddies, John Wood left caddying to be an on-course analyst for NBC and Golf Channel. He is tight with Woods, knows his game and could be an option for tournaments that CBS broadcasts. □

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In an era when home court means less and less, the Boston Celtics are 16-0 at TD Garden

By NOAH TRISTER
AP Sports Writer

When the Boston Celtics were winning championships with Larry Bird and Kevin McHale in the 1980s, they were notoriously tough to beat at home. The old Boston Garden could be oppressively hot, and a rowdy home crowd added another obstacle. Buildings in the NBA aren't like that anymore, but the current Celtics are on their own impressive run at home. Boston is 16-0 at TD Garden. With its corporate name and modern feel, that arena doesn't have the mystique of the old Garden, but it does house a fine basketball team that is trying to leave its own mark on Celtics history.

"We got the best fans in the league," guard Derrick White said last month when asked about receiving "MVP" chants. "I know I'm not the MVP, but it's always cool to hear."

Forgive Boston fans for getting a little carried away. At home at least, the Celtics look worthy of quite a few honors.

Amazingly, Boston's perfect home record nearly ended last week against a team trying to halt an even longer streak. The Detroit Pistons took a 21-point lead in the second quarter before the Celtics came all the way back to win 128-122 in overtime on Thursday night. It was a record-tying 28th straight loss for the Pistons, and Boston would have been a most unlikely place for them to finally win.

Detroit did end the streak two nights later at home against Toronto. That was a night after the Celtics had also defeated Toronto at home, again barely keeping their streak alive with a 120-118 victory. Boston's next home game is Friday against Utah. Minnesota, in town next week, could provide a significant test.

What's interesting about this run by the Celtics is that overall, home-court advantage isn't nearly what it used to be in the

NBA. Last season, the home team won 58% of the time in the regular season. That number is around the same this season. Back in the late 80s, that figure was north of 65%. In the 1950-51 season, it was 74%.

In some ways, the Celtics themselves have reflected the overall state of home-court advantage in the NBA. In 1954-55 — when home court was a huge deal — Boston went 21-5 at home and 4-22 on the road.

In 1985-86, the Celtics set a record by going 40-1 at home. Then they went 10-0 at home in the playoffs en route to the championship. Nowadays, nobody feels that unbeatable at home.



Fans react behind Boston Celtics' Jrue Holiday (4) and Toronto Raptors' Dennis Schroder (17) after the Celtics prevented the Raptors from scoring in the final seconds of the fourth quarter during an NBA basketball game, Friday, Dec. 29, 2023, in Boston. Associated Press

Even Denver, with its difficult altitude, lost seven home games during the regular season in 2022-23,

then another in the post-season on its way to the title. Whether it's because of more comfortable travel,

less intimidating venues or other reasons, winning on the road is a good bit more common now.

That's not to say nobody can put up a dominant home record anymore. San Antonio matched Boston's record by going 40-1 in 2015-16, losing only to Golden State in its next-to-last home game — a victory the Warriors needed while closing in on the all-time wins record of 73.

Of course, those Spurs then dropped two of their three home games during a second-round playoff loss to Oklahoma City.

There are signs that home-court advantage isn't as big a factor anymore in the postseason either. □



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